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Their Mariposa Legend

A Romance of Santa Catalina

By

CHARLOTTE HERR

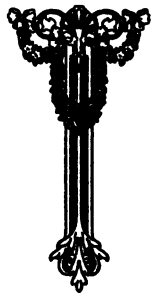
THEIR MARIPOSA LEGEND

A ROMANCE OF SANTA CATALINA

"The vessel came slowly on and dropped anchor in the Bay of Moons."

THEIR MARIPOSA LEGEND

A ROMANCE OF SANTA CATALINA



BY
CHARLOTTE HERR

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TO LITTLE BRUCE PARKER

WHO LOVED STORIES

Nov. 10 1923

PART I

Sir Francis Starts It

IT BEGAN to happen a long time ago, centuries ago, when, in a fragrant rush of rain, spring came one day to Punagwandah, fairest of the Channel Islands. Beneath the golden mists of sunrise danced a radiant sea. On steeply sloping hillsides where thickets of wild lilac bloomed, the lark shook from his tiny throat a tumult of glad music. In shadowed niches of the canyons lilies waited to fill with light their gleaming ivory cups. Spring in very truth was there.

And looking down upon it from her cavern bower high above the beach, watched the Princess Wildenai. Kneeling there, the light of dawn shining on her long black hair, she was, herself, the sweetest blossom of the spring. Loveliest was she among all the maidens of the Mariposa and of royal blood besides; although of this the great chief Torquam, who even at that moment lay sleeping in his lodge

of deerskin on the crescent beach below, knew more than he had ever told.

With eyes rapt, her breath scarcely stirring the folds of softest fawnskin drawn across her breast, the princess bent her gaze to where the waves ran silver on the ocean's distant rim. There she knew the sun must rise and, as the first dazzling ray sparkled across the water, she rose slowly until she stood erect, a slender, graceful figure against the dim, gray rocks, and stretching her arms toward the East, spoke in the musical words of her people.

"Oh, Waken-ate, great spirit-father," she pleaded, "have mercy on me. Grant to me, thy humble daughter, one only boon. Grant, I pray thee, that it need not be I wed with Torquam's friend, the pale-face stranger. Well knowest thou I would not disobey my father, him the bravest and most powerful of all thy warriors, him whom his people delight to honor, and whom I strive to please. All the more I feel my duty since, many moons ago, they laid my mother underneath the flowers. Yet, even so, I cannot find it in my heart to wed with Don Cabrillo, dearly as does my father wish it. Can'st thou not then, in thy great

power, turn his heart, oh lord of spirits, that he no longer may desire it? Help me in this, my only trial, I pray thee, and in all else will I be indeed his loyal daughter,—in all else save alone in this one thing!"

Her arms fell. Slowly she sank again to her knees, bending her head until her forehead touched the ground. For many minutes she lay thus prostrate while the glory of the rising sun bathed the sea in splendor. Yet, when at last she rose, her eyes were dim with tears.

But now from the beach below there drifted up to her the sounds of a village astir. Shrill voices of women mingled with the crackling of freshly kindled fires. A canoe, pushed hastily into the water, grated harshly on the pebbles. Still the maiden did not stir. Leaning against the rocky ledge, her chin in her hands, she gazed listlessly out over the shining sea. If any interests lived for her among the dark-skinned people beneath the cliffs, for the moment at least she gave no sign.

Then, suddenly, above the ordinary din of the Indian village, rose the hoarse shouting of men. Wildenai lifted her eyes,—eyes that widened first with wonder, then with fear. For

there, far down the shoreline to the south, her sails gleaming white against the walls of rock behind her as she rounded a distant point, a ship came slowly into view. With wildly beating heart the young girl watched the vessel tack to clear the long curve of the coast. But once before in all her life had she seen such another monster winged canoe, and that had been when Senor Don Cabrillo first cast anchor in the Bay of Moons below, now almost a year ago. For many a week had the young man lingered, renewing the friendship with the Mariposa cemented more than eighteen years before when his father, hindered by storms in his adventurous journey up the coast, cast anchor off the shore,—the first white man to see their island. Nor was the lingering without result. Torquam he taught to speak the Spanish tongue, learning in his turn safer and easier routes to the gold fields of the north, while not the least among the treasures carried with him when at last he sailed away did he hold the promise that the beautiful daughter of the chief should become his bride when next he touched upon that shore. Could this, then, be the Spaniard's

fleet returning? Was the Great Spirit powerless, after all, to save her? In sore bewilderment and terror Wildenai watched the distant ship.

Nearer and nearer it came. But, as its outline grew each moment more distinct, gradually her fears departed. For this was not the clumsy Spanish galleon she remembered. The prow was not nearly so high, nor was the incoming vessel as large in any respect as had been that other. Yet, though fear died, wonder grew. What new variety of strangers, then, was about to visit them? For that the ship intended to anchor she was by this time sure. Steadily it bore on until within a scant half mile of the crescent shaped beach where lay the royal village of the tribe. At length, as if in fear to trust themselves closer to the rocky shore, the crew were seen to bring the vessel sharply about. An anchor was cast over, the creaking of the hawsers distinctly audible in the clear morning air, and a few moments later a small boat was lowered. Into this boat immediately several sailors swung themselves and after a short delay, amidst the shouting of the Indians, now running in wild

excitement up and down the beach, the men picked up their oars and started for the land.

"Alla-hoa, Wildenai!"

Up the stony trail leading to her cavern scrambled an Indian runner, a lithe youth who flung himself breathless at her feet.

"Thy father, oh princess, sends me to summon thee to his lodge. Strangers,—pale-face strangers,—enemies, who can tell, are coming. See,—the ship!" With dark fore-finger he pointed toward the sea. "Torquam would have thee hide with the rest of the women in the cave at the Great Rock. There Kathah-galwa wilt keep thee safe, he says. Make haste, oh Wildenai!"

"And am I not as safe up here?" returned the princess, calmly. "Be not so lost in thy terror, oh Norqua. I, too, have seen the ship and I fear not. Yet will I obey if so my father bids," she added quickly. "Go thou ahead. I follow." And hastily gathering together some reeds and colored grasses lying on the ledge, parts of an unfinished basket upon which, evidently, she had during some previous visit been at work, she flung them into a corner of

the cavern and ran lightly down the narrow path leading to the village.

Here all by this time was tense excitement, the dramatic, ungoverned excitement of children. While with shrill cries two or three of the women gathered the little ones together, the rest pulled frantically at the poles holding each tepee in place. Still apparently quite unmoved, Wildenai sought first her father standing surprised but unafraid in the doorway of his lodge. Tall and spare and stern he looked, straight as some lonely pine on the slopes of distant San Jacinto. Yet even in the stress of such a moment a tender light stole into his eyes as they rested upon his motherless daughter.

Wildenai made obeisance and for a brief moment the two surveyed each other in silence. Then,

"It is well thou art come, my beloved one," spoke the chief. "Stranger pale-faces will soon be amongst us."

"Wildenai feels no fear, my father," quietly answered the girl.

"If they come in friendship," quickly Torquam replied, "then indeed may all be well. But the ship is not of the Senor's fleet, and if

so be that we must fight, thou wert better hidden in the cave. We shall see."

Bending her head in mute acquiescence the girl moved away to join the group of women now almost ready to depart.

Meantime the vessel's long boat, driven onward by the stout arms of three strong sailors, steadily approached the bay.

"What think'st thou then, Rufus Broadmead, of this fool's errand to the savages?" inquired one of these, resting upon his oars for a moment that he might the better listen to the tumult on the shore. "Wot ye not that if water had been the only boon he craves the captain had fared much better on the mainland? Besides, did not I myself overhear the Apache only yesterday tell him of a certainty that the tribes over there were away on the warpath? But no, by the mass, here must we risk our precious scalps to row into the very teeth of the heathen, and that to humor the whim of as obstinate an Englishman as ever

sailed aboard Her Majesty's fleets!" and without awaiting any reply he lowered his oars in disgust.

The others laughed.

"Hast been, then, so stupid, brother Giles, for all thy listening with thy big ears, as not to know 'tis Spanish treasure ever and naught else our captain seeks? Water,—pouf!" the speaker made a rough grimace, "water may well serve as an excuse, and what to bold Sir Francis were the lives of half a dozen seamen when booty for the queen lies in the balance? The Apache told him, too,—thou see'st thou hast not played the listening game alone, for, hiding behind the fo'castle door myself, I heard him say it,—that here lay that famous island, San—how is't they call it? San Catlina—I know not how 'tis spoken,—some Spanish lingo not fit for English tongues! At any rate 'twas here your Spanish robber, Don Cabrillo, and, for the matter of that, his precious son as well, stopped to seek direction ere they found the land of gold. The savage sware besides they were a gentle tribe, not given to war and murder like the rest. I hearkened well, forsooth, knowing past doubt I would be

een one o' those chosen to try 'em out. The devil take the Apache an he lied," he added fiercely, "I'll break his head across till even he shrieks out for help when I get back!"

He paused to gaze fearfully at the stern cliffs now looming close at hand, beneath which the excited natives still ran back and forth, pointing with frantic gestures at the boat.

The third man spoke. He was smaller than the other two and darker, with a sly look about his eyes and mouth in strong contrast to the bluff frankness of his comrades. So far he had appeared content to listen in amused silence, but now with a short laugh he interrupted.

"The Apache did not lie. This is the island Santa Catalina, though that, mark you, is not the Indian name. And right well can the chief who rules here direct our captain also to the goldfields of the north. But hearkee, comrades. 'Tis not Drake will reap the profits this time!" He lowered his voice mysteriously as though fearful of being overheard, albeit nothing was nearer than his two companions and the clear, green stretch of water. "Have ye not observed the boy who travels with the cap-

tain?—the boy I serve,—the one they call Sir Harry? To my mind, cub though he be, 'tis he who rules the ship. Hast never noticed how the great Drake himself bends to his slightest wish?"

"Aye, marry, that have I! And who, then, is he, think'st thou?" inquired the man who had spoken first.

"Some close kin to the queen,—that much I know," the other answered quickly, "the heir to some great dukedom, mayhap, in disguise to see the world and make a fortune. 'Tis his desire we land, so much he told me, and 'tis to learn more than directions, my hearties, and that I'll warrant ye! But, look ye, the water grows too shallow! We can use the oars no longer."

And even as he spoke the boat grated upon the pebbles. An incoming breaker would have carried it ashore, but before the sailors could take advantage of this help or even so much as ship their oars, half a dozen swarthy youths had waded out and, with shouts and gestures, whether of welcome or hostility the Englishmen had no means of knowing, pushed it high upon the beach. At once, then, for well they

realized the danger of delay, and with a stolid courage born of many a like adventure, the seamen leaped fearlessly out upon the sand. In their hands they held aloft bolts of brightly colored cloth snatched on the instant from the bottom of the boat. These they offered for the wondering inspection of the women who, observing the small number of invaders, were cautiously returning. To the warriors grouped about the chief they proffered knives of which the steel blades, set in strong handles of bone, glistened in the sun. Eagerly, yet with a certain unexpected formality, the men accepted these, passing them for examination from one to another with many a grunt of satisfaction. To be sure, no brave among them but might the next moment decide to try out the merits of his gift upon the bestower, but this danger the adventurers had to risk. More timidly the women, their eyes fixed wistfully upon the gaudy red and yellow cloth, approached the strangers, offering in their turn bits of abalone shell polished to iridescent beauty.

They seemed in truth a gentle, friendly people, so much so that at length the sailors, deeming it safe to undertake the second part

of their errand, began to plead for water and to request, besides, an interview between their captain and the chief. All this by means of signs in which they displayed no little wit and skill, the Englishmen accomplished until, well on toward the middle of the morning, they made ready to return to the ship, the casks they had brought brimming with sweet mountain water, while with them they bore as well the promise of an interview of state between the great chief Torquam and Sir Francis Drake, to take place upon the beach at sunset.

And then at once the little village of Toyobet seethed again with excitement. For these good pale-face friends and their god-like commander a fitting welcome must be prepared. Fleet-footed messengers, bearing flaming torches, sped in hot haste along the mountain trails that all who saw might know without words spoken of the assembling of the tribe. To the distant village at the isthmus they hurried, and to the cove on the western coast, some twenty miles away, to which a band of warriors had gone several days before to hunt the otter. That no one among his people might remain in ignorance of his command, Torquam

even caused signal fires to be kindled on each of the twin peaks, extinct volcanoes, near the center of the island. Smoke rising there was visible from every corner of his land, and woe to any subject who dared to disregard that warning!

Throughout the long bright day the women toiled, preparing a ceremonial feast. Three antelope, a deer, and half a dozen of the wild sheep which roamed the hills were killed and placed for roasting over deep pits dug in the sand. Nor did any member of the tribe forget in his own crude fashion to deck himself for the occasion. The warriors adorned their heads with feathers and daubed their cheeks and lips with ochre. The women clothed themselves in loose-hanging tunics of doeskin girt with strings of wampum, and hung about their tawny shoulders the lovely greens and blues of uncut turquoise. Meanwhile, also, the great chief Torquam donned his ceremonial dress, a string of eagle feathers held by the crimsoned quills of the porcupine and extending down his back until almost it touched the ground. About his neck, as token of his priesthood, he threw the bear-

claw necklace, known far and wide among the tribes for its famous powers of healing. Wildenai alone made no change except to bind the satin black of her hair still more smoothly within a fillet of silver. In the center of the band, so that it rested just above her brow, a strange device appeared, a circle enclosing many rays,—the royal insignia of the tribe which only the daughter of the chief might wear.

Then at last when, in the sunset, level rays of light rested golden on the bay and turned to amethyst the distant mountains on the mainland, all was ready. Once again, this time to the weird music of tom-toms and the beating of drums, a boat was lowered from the ship while on the shore the Indians watched.

It was in truth a picture not soon to be forgotten. Behind the mirrored Bay of Moons, its crescent of sand gleaming white against the rocks, the bands of dusky men and women stood motionless as statues in the quiet light of the setting sun, while in the doorway of his

lodge, his daughter close beside him, Torquam waited with simple dignity to receive his guests, the fair-skinned strangers.

At length along the beach advanced the little group of English, friends and fellow adventurers with the most renowned of all their great queen's buccaneers. Beside Sir Francis himself marched young Harold of Wessex, little more than a boy in years, yet dreaded and feared in his own land even then—a possible heir to Elizabeth's throne. Some short distance in front of these two, standard bearers carried the flags of Merry England, each glorious with fringes and tassels of gold. Well might such banners dazzle the eyes and wits of simple savages.

Yet, possibly, for all that, had it not been for the lengthy ceremonial of the peace-pipe, Wildenai could not have taken time to observe so closely, in stolen glances from beneath her long black lashes, the splendor of the young noble standing proudly erect beside his captain; nor could he have stared so often, with no attempt to hide his admiration, at the dark beauty of the princess.

Perhaps, too, if fate had not contrived to place them side by side at the feast which followed, young Harold might never have discovered that an Indian girl, however beautiful, possessed the wit to learn a foreign language. Yet it was certainly Spanish and that well spoken in which, at length, she softly asked of her father a question intended obviously for himself.

Under cover of one of the Indian dances with which, from time to time, the feast was enlivened, he leaned impulsively toward her.

"Can'st speak the Spanish tongue?" he hastily inquired.

The princess dropped her eyes. For a moment she remained silent as if debating to what extent such boldness might involve her. Then, with a glance as shy as if some deer gazed at him startled from the thicket,

"Yes, mon senor," she answered simply. "I learned it when Don Cabrillo came to Punagwandah many moons ago."

After that it was only that one thing led to another, as was sometimes true of men and maidens even in the days so long gone by. For, as if by common consent, then, they drew a

little apart from the rest, where, throwing himself on the sand beside her while the firelight threw flickering shadows among the rocks, the young man related fragments of his story,—of the long journey across the sea, something of his home in England, and of the brilliant court of the great queen wherein he had served as gentleman-in-waiting. So *had* he served, yet soon,—but here her guest had suddenly flushed and paused as though he spoke too hastily or of what he should not. To all of it the princess listened with fast-beating heart and a desire, ever growing, to make herself a place in this splendid stranger's world. Was not she then, also, the daughter of a king? Yet how different and how unimportant beside that wonderful woman of whom he spoke! For father she boasted the great chief Torquam, feared by every tribe in the north and rich because of the gold hidden in many a canyon among the distant mountains; yet her woman's instinct told her that to this proud Englishman her people were at best little more than a curiosity, almost, indeed, a cause for laughter.

When at last the feast was finished, Torquam rose, and removing with slow solemnity

his crest of eagle feathers, he placed it upon the head of Sir Francis, a seal of everlasting friendship. With difficulty young Harold suppressed a smile. But the older man, as well aware of what the situation demanded as he was keenly alive to its danger, received the attention with a gravity fully equal to that of his host. Indeed, he went still further.

"Most gracious hast thou been, oh Torquam, all wise chief of the Mariposa," he began in carefully chosen Spanish, "nor shall thy kingly gift remain unrequited. Listen, oh Torquam! On yonder vessel I carry steeds like those of which I told you. For a journey over the mountains of the north we have brought them. One there is, swifter of foot than all the rest. Him will I cause my men to lower into the boat and bring to you after our return tonight."

In silence Torquam inclined his head. Nothing could have pleased him more. He would be the first then, of all his tribe to own one of those strange yet wondrous creatures never before seen in his world until the Spanish landed! Yet only the eager gleam in his eyes betrayed his pleasure. But Harold of

Wessex stared at his captain in blank astonishment, for the gift he had just bestowed with such apparent carelessness was the most valuable bit of cargo in the ship, a costly Arabian horse intended for the young noble's own special comfort and convenience during the search for gold on which they were bound. Was Drake gone suddenly mad, then, thus to throw away, and that without permission, his choicest property on a mere savage? Hot with resentment he was about to interfere; but before he could obey the rash impulse his better judgment prevailed, and just in time he remembered how, on several other such occasions, his very life had been saved by some swift expedient of Drake's and his tact in handling the natives.

Slowly Sir Francis continued, and now one watching intently might have sensed from the gleam in his eyes that he had reached the real point in the interview.

"One question, nevertheless, would I ask of all-wise Torquam before we part." He hesitated, searching the impassive face of the Indian. "Can'st tell me of a Spaniard, one Cabrillo, son to that arch pirate of Spain, who, since his father's death, still sails upon these

waters? To him I bear a message,"—again he paused while the heart of Wildenai beat in sudden panic beneath her fawnskin tunic; but Torquam's face remained blank as a page unwritten,—"a message from our queen," added Drake. The last words were uttered with significance.

The Indian slowly shook his head.

"The noble white chief asks what is unknown to any man," he answered. "The young Cabrillo once landed, 'tis true, on Punagwandah. Many moons ago it was. Where he is now, how should Torquam know?"

In his bitter disappointment the hand of the Englishman sought the hilt of his sword. Instantly a ring of warriors closed darkly about the chief.

Drake laughed.

"Nay then, 'tis but by chance I asked thee, thinking thou mightst tell me. It matters not. The gift I promised thee will come, as I said, tonight."

He turned to go and young Harold rose to follow. Then, perceiving the dark eyes of the princess fixed wistfully upon him, he hesitated

and, obeying a sudden impulse, he stepped hastily to her side.

"When they return with the gift for thy father," he whispered, "I will come with them," he smiled into her soft eyes shining with pleased surprise, "and I will bring a gift to thee as well, oh Wildenai, fairest of maidens!"

Drake gave a sharp command. His followers sprang to their feet, and without further ceremony the party passed quickly down the beach to their boat.

But the princess Wildenai did not leave the feasting ground. Hidden by deepening shadows she watched the ship's lights glimmer across the water. Glad indeed was she of the darkness, for a warm flush glowed in her cheeks and her heart throbbed with a strange new pleasure, a pleasure bordering close on fear, yet wholly sweet.

But when, at length, the quiet of sleep had descended upon the village, once again she sought her father. He, too, within the open doorway of his lodge, watched intently the distant ship. Without surprise he saw his daughter enter and, as she knelt upon the

"Oh, Waken-ate, great spirit-father," pleaded the princess, "have mercy on me!"

blanket beside him, he stretched a hand and drew her close.

"It grows cold. The wind is rising. 'Twere best to wait inside." He spoke in the musical Indian tongue. For a moment he stroked her hair in silence, then—

"What think'st thou by now of the English, Wildenai, my little wild rose?" he asked.

But the princess seemed not to have heard his question.

"My father," she began after another short silence, "I have a favor to ask of thee."

"And what may that be, my daughter?" he returned gravely.

But again the young girl made no answer and for many minutes they watched the tremulous paths of light in the wake of the vessel.

After a time he felt her hand tighten upon his arm.

"It is but the old boon over again, my father." Her voice was low as the sighing of the wind among the oak trees. "I would be freed from my promise to wed with Don Cabrillo."

An Indian is not given to caresses. Much more used was Torquam's hand to wield the

war-club or the hatchet. Yet it was with fingers gentle as any woman's that he stroked the smooth black head at his knee.

"Doubtest thou then, my motherless one, the judgment of him who loves thee?" he asked.

"I doubt it not, my father," answered his daughter. "Yet would I not wed with the Spaniard," she added stubbornly.

The blue-eyed senor from England"—there was a hint of humor in his tone,—"he it is who steals thy fancy! Is it not so, my Wildenai?"

Then, after a moment: "Right well knowest thou my only wish is to make thee happy." Again his voice, though gentle, grew serious almost to sadness. "No mere whim it is that counsels me to wed thee to Cabrillo. "There is something—" He paused, continuing with effort,—"a reason I have never told thee why it seems most fitting. Now I will tell thee. That reason is because,—because, my Wildenai, thou art Spanish born thyself."

The princess drew a hasty breath. In the darkness he felt rather than saw her startled eyes upon him.

"My father!" The exclamation, filled with pain as well as astonishment, touched him to the quick. Tenderly he drew her to him. Then briefly, as was the Indian way, yet with the pictured phrasing which caused each scene to spring into vivid life before the young girl's eyes, he told her of the day, already more than eighteen years gone by, when, in the wake of a long midwinter storm, the first sailing vessel ever beheld by his people had fled for refuge to their bay; and of the little girl carefully brought to shore by her old nurse in the first boat to touch the beach. A mere baby she was, too young to know aught of her misfortune, yet a princess royal, rudely dispossessed of her right to the throne of Spain, and smuggled aboard the adventurer Cabrillo's ship to be dropped in some out-of-the-way corner of the western world. Even then, he made it clear, she might have perished,—since little recked the Spanish explorer what should happen, well knowing that upon his return no questions would be asked, — had it not been for his Indian wife. She, lacking children of her own, had taken an instant fancy to the dark-eyed little girl, a fancy so strong that nothing would

do but they must adopt her as their own daughter into the tribe to belong forever, according to their law, she and her children, to the Mariposa.

"Nor, because thy mother—for ever was she a true mother to thee—thought that it might grieve thee, have any of my people ever given thee cause to doubt that thou wert native born," he finished proudly. "Loyal have they been, doing all they could to make thee happy. But now that thy Indian mother is dead, and I myself grow old, I thought to wed thee, knowing his desire, to the son of that same Cabrillo who brought thee to us, for I long to be sure, when at length I go, that thou art safe,—at home."

He waited then and in the silence only the low weeping of the girl was heard. At length the old chief spoke again, and now in his voice love conquered disappointment.

"Much do I desire it, but that matters not. I would not have thee unhappy. I myself will tell the senor that what he hopes for cannot be."

Slowly Wildenai bent her head until it touched his feet. Then she nestled close against him.

"I thank thee, oh my father!" she cried, and all her voice was music because of her joy. "And thou art still my father," she added, earnestly. "What care I to go to Spain? I will stay always with thee."

"For a time, it may be. Yet have a care, little wild rose," he cautioned, smiling, "Let not the Englishman lure thee away! He, too, may not be all that thou thinkest."

And even as he spoke, in mocking confirmation of his words, there came to them suddenly from across the water, the distant creaking of ropes, the snapping of sails flung hastily to the wind. Before their unbelieving eyes the vessel swung about and put slowly out to sea. Dumb with amazement they watched until the last faint light flickered into darkness. Not until the remotest chance of a mistake was past did the old chief rise, trembling with rage, to his feet.

"See'st thou now what I meant, my daughter? The English pale-faces know not the meaning of honor,—no, nor of gratitude either!"

He lifted his long spear from the ground and shook it fiercely.

"The words of the Mariposa are few," he cried, "but their revenge is sure. Let but an Englishman set foot again on Punagwandah and, swifter than the arrow leaves the bow-string, he dies!"

And at once, without answer, in the silence of suffering which only the wild things of the earth understand, Wildenai crept from the lodge, her heart heavy with its own bitter disappointment. Noiselessly she passed among the tepees where her father's people slept. Not one of them should ever know how far dwelt slumber from her own eyes that night. Up the steep trail beyond the Bay of Moons she climbed and flung herself weeping on the bed of skins within the cavern.

"Oh, thou false one," she moaned, "why did'st thou promise then, when never did'st thou mean to keep it?"

Yet nothing had been farther from the young Englishman's thoughts when he left her than faithlessness to his word. On reaching the ship again he had gone directly to his

cabin. Here he took from its small but richly embroidered case a slender chain of gold, threaded so closely with garnets that even in the dim light of the one flaring lantern, the only illumination the room could boast, it glowed, a glancing stream of crimson, in his hand. This he carried to the light and as he examined it under the lantern he smiled.

"Never saw the little maid such jewels before, I'll warrant me! Yet, beshrew my heart, but she deserves them. Indian though she be, still is she, nevertheless, the loveliest woman that ever mine eyes have looked upon!"

Then, stowing the necklace carefully away in his belt, he went at once in search of the commander.

But at this point an unexpected difficulty had presented itself. He found Sir Francis in close conversation with his pilot.

"Marry, Sir, an it fit n'er so ill with thy wish," the keen-eyed old mariner was saying. "I still maintain it were a shame to lose this wind. Gift or no gift, I've sailed these latitudes before, my lord, and by heaven I swear we're not like to have such another breeze, no, not till the change of the moon, and that you know yourself, sir, is a good fortnight hence."

Sir Francis, striding back and forth within the narrow confines of the quarter deck, appeared to be weighing the old man's words with unusual care. At length, however, he turned as one who has made his decision.

"By the mass and it shall be even as you say, Jarvis," he declared. "I think myself 'twere well to push on at once. At the most they be but Indians!" The last words were spoken in a lower tone as if to himself. " 'Twill matter little either way!"

It was at this point that young Harold stepped hastily forward. For, strangely enough, although on the morning of that same day such a proceeding would scarcely have appealed to him as being at all unfitting or out of the ordinary, yet now it seemed unthinkable.

"But, good sir," he interrupted, "you would not so belie your promise! To do as Jarvis here advises,—by heaven, 'twould be neither truthful nor honorable! 'Tis not like you, Sir Francis!"

Drake shot at him a surprised glance from under his bushy eyebrows, then shrugged his shoulders.

"Prate not to me, my lord, of truth or honor amongst these savages," he replied. "Did not their chief himself but even now lie to me? Well knew the rascally heathen where the Spaniard hides! The truth indeed! They know not the meaning of such words."

In vain the younger man petitioned to be allowed to deliver the promised gift with the aid of his own retinue.

"Thou can'st not get under way for two hours at best, sir," he pleaded, "and well within that time I will be back. 'Tis but a stone's throw to the shore!"

But Drake first scoffed at his rashness, then, finally losing patience, as commander of the expedition he sternly forbade him or any of his men to leave the ship.

"We dare not lose the wind," he finished emphatically, "and are like to start at any minute." Then, turning on his heel, he strode away to his cabin and shut the door behind him.

Left in this unceremonious fashion, young Harold considered a moment, glancing with anxious eyes at the dim line of the coast just visible in the darkness. For some minutes he leaned upon the rail, lost in thought.

"The old man will e'en have to bear his disappointment, "he muttered at length, "but, an' heaven help me, the maid shall not!"

Then he, too, left the deck to seek out his favorite retainer, the dark, swarthy man who had sat that morning in the prow of the long boat. To him he explained his difficulty, adding grimly:

"And so thou see'st, Mortimer, that I have work cut out for thee!"

He threw an arm about the other's shoulders and in this familiar fashion the two men paced the deck together, conversing in low tones.

"And besides," observed the nobleman as they paused a moment before parting, "would'st know the truth about the matter? For all old Jarvis' prating, the Golden Hind is not like to sail before the dawn, no, nor even then! Jarvis is ever the man to make a show of much hurry, but—" he snapped his fingers scornfully, "only aid me now, unseen by anyone, to launch the Zephir, and by our virgin queen herself I swear, when once again we see the shores of Merry England, thou shalt find 'twas well worth thy trouble."

His companion smiled even while, with the trained servility of the retainer, he doffed his cap.

"Aye, truly, my lord," he answered, "but, since it were an impossible feat to get so much as a colt into the Zephir, methinks thou hast a gift of thine own to bestow on yonder pretty Indian maid!"

The blood leaped to Sir Harry's cheek. With a quick gesture he placed his hand upon his sword.

"Presume not upon my favor, Mortimer, or by heaven!—" he began angrily, but stopped suddenly as, with a fearless laugh, the man beside him pushed the half-drawn weapon back into its place.

"Nay then, not so fast, my lord," he chuckled gaily. "Hearkee, my master. I did but use my eyes during their everlasting pow-wow. Surely ye would not grudge me that! And the maid is comely, well worth a trinket from thy store. Besides," he laughed slyly, "I saw e'en more to thine interest, for methinks the princess is as much in love with thy looks as art thou with hers."

"Silence, fool! Thou hast said more than enough already. Think'st thou the son of a

duke royal would look at a brown-skinned savage, an unbelieving pagan, no matter how comely, as thou call'st it, she might be!"

But the flush remained, nevertheless, on the dark cheek of the young nobleman as he strode angrily from the deck.

The moonlight had laid a quivering path of light across the water before Wildenai raised her bowed head from the ground. But, at length, drawing her blanket more closely about her, for into the night air the chill of the ocean had crept, she was about to leave the cave when a sudden sound from the beach below arrested her. For a moment she listened in silence while the shout was repeated, then stood dumb with amazement. A third time it came to her, borne on the rising wind, the terrified cry of a man in dire distress. Nor was it one of her own people who thus called out of the darkness for help. Swiftly she ran to an overhanging ledge of rock from which, by lying flat and peeping over, she could, without exposing herself, command a wide view of the sea.

At the first glance there appeared to be nothing amiss. Far beneath her the noisy breakers spilled in liquid silver on the beach. Above their musical booming no other sound could be heard. Then suddenly she saw him. A tiny boat it was, tossing dangerously close to the great rounded boulder which, together with a still larger one from which it had at some distant time been broken off, formed the outermost boundary of the curving Beach of Moons. The dark figure standing erect in the boat strove with the aid of an oar to keep it from being dashed to pieces against the giant rock. Again there floated up to her the desperate call for help. The voice was that of the English noble!

Instantly the girl sprang to her feet, and without the slightest hesitation ran lightly down the perilous incline, leaping fearlessly from rock to rock, until, within a few seconds, she stood poised above the seething surf on the top of the larger boulder. Here, balancing herself as easily and securely as a wild antelope, she raised her arms to dive. But now from the shadows below the white man called once more.

"Attempt it not, oh Wildenai! 'Tis death to leap from there!"

But without waiting even to reply, the Indian girl sprang into the waves. An instant later and he saw her arms gleam in the moonlight as, with the strong slow strokes of an experienced swimmer, she struck out for the boat. In spite of the perilous rocking of the little craft he rested on his oar to watch her for a moment in sheer admiration of her skill. But the maid knew well the danger of every instant's delay. In the very nick of time she seemed almost to throw herself between him and the rocks while, with a strength he would have believed impossible in one so small, she pulled the boat around. Then, still swimming and without a word to him, she began to push it ahead of her toward the shore. It was but a few minutes before they stood together on the beach.

And now the young noble, overcome with gratitude, fell on his knees before her and caught her hand between his own. He would have kissed it in sheer joy at his escape, but the Indian girl drew sharply back.

"Quick!" she whispered, yet remembering to speak in Spanish, "You must hide yourself at once. My father will kill you if he should find you here!"

Swiftly she concealed the boat in a tiny cove behind the boulder, a hiding place he would never have seen though it was apparently perfectly familiar to her.

"Sometimes my own canoe I keep there too," she whispered. "Now come!" and she hurried him along the beach and up an easier trail beyond the rocks to her cavern bower above.

Nor did she pause for an instant's rest until they had passed safely behind the manzanita branches which concealed the entrance. Here, motioning him to do the same, she dropped upon a pile of skins. But instead, in real concern, the young Englishman knelt again beside her.

"Thou art so wet and cold," he began anxiously, "Will it not make thee ill? Yet 'twas a wondrous feat," he added admiringly, "well conceived and carried out with skill such as any man might envy!"

The princess laughed.

" 'Twas nothing," she answered briefly. "I do it almost every day."

"I came to bring to thee the gift I promised," explained Lord Harold then, and from his belt he drew the little case. Eagerly he flung the gleaming string of garnets about her slim brown throat.

"Jewels brought by my father to my mother on the morning of their marriage," he told her. "When she lay dying she gave them me and told me never to part with them except I gave them to my—" He paused suddenly, "But thou hast saved my life!" he added as quickly, "Who else could ever deserve them more? Well know I my mother would wish thee to have them."

Silently, though her eyes were bright with pleasure, the princess lifted the beautiful necklace.

"Wildenai will wear them always, senor lord," she answered softly, "for now she knows that truly you did mean to keep your word!"

And so, his mission accomplished, her guest rose hastily to his feet. He must return immediately to the ship.

"Know you not, then, that it is gone?" exclaimed the girl, amazed.

"Gone?" echoed young Harold, and stared at her astounded. He seemed not to have grasped her meaning. "Gone, said'st thou?"

"The ship was out of sight a full hour or more ere ever I heard you call," she explained.

Still he continued to gaze at her fixedly as if totally unable to comprehend what she would have him know. Then it was plain to be seen that, for the moment at least, blank despair took hold upon him. Up and down the length of the cave he strode like some imprisoned wild thing. At length, standing quite still with folded arms, he seemed to lose himself in thought.

"Battling with the surf I did not see nor hear," he muttered at last. "But he could not sail without me!" he added. Fiercely he raised his head and his eyes flashed. "He dare not so betray me!"

Wildenai, too, had been considering.

"The great white captain knew, then, that you were not on board?" she asked suddenly.

"No," replied the young man reluctantly, "that did he not. I came without his knowl-

edge. He would have prevented me," he continued stubbornly, "and I had promised thee a gift. Never did I break my word, nor would not then. But I did not dream it possible they could get away so soon! By our virgin lady in Heaven I swear I know not what to do." And once more he seemed lost in despair.

But only for a moment. Then he turned hastily to the entrance.

"I must follow them at once," he declared impatiently, "I can overtake them even yet."

Swift as lightning the girl threw herself between him and the opening in the cave.

"No, no, senor Englishman," she cried. "It is impossible! Listen, only listen to me! What have you, then, to steer by save the stars? And you see that, drowned in moonlight, they do not shine tonight. And, more than that, you do not even know what course the vessel takes. Remember, too, that there is neither food nor drink within your boat. You would surely die ere you could ever find the ship."

Gradually she compelled him to listen to reason until, seating himself again upon the skins, he challenged her still further.

"But what, then, shall I do?" he demanded. "Can'st also tell me that?"

And with equal readiness the princess replied:

"If you will but let me I can hide you here. The cavern is my own. Here for many a moon have I worked and waited. No one would dare to enter. You will be safe. Besides, my father's anger will grow cold in time, and then I know that, if I ask him, he will help you."

His chin propped upon his hands, the young nobleman moodily considered.

"Well, do then as thou deemest best," he told her finally.

And from that moment there began for the little princess a time so wonderful that for all the rest of her life she remembered each separate hour as though it had been some beautiful word in a poem learned by heart.

With deft fingers she piled her softest doeskins for his bed.

"But what wilt thou do, tell me, if I rob thee of thy nest?" he asked, watching her with amused eyes as she worked.

"I go always to the village to sleep," she answered simply, and so left him.

But in the morning while yet the red of sunrise burned above the great peak Orazaba, she returned, bearing upon her head an olla of carved stone filled with water from a mountain spring. This in smiling silence she set before him and disappeared. Within the hour, however, she was back again and this time, kneeling on the ground, she laid at his feet the ripe fruit of the manzanita tree, lying like small red apples, dewy fresh, upon a wild-grape leaf.

"Ala—ate, see! Are they not good?" she asked triumphantly.

And so from day to day she ministered to him. Many a time as he sat, listless and moody, within his hiding-place, a handful of wild strawberries, steeped in the warm sweetness of the hills, would be pushed beneath the leafy branches that concealed the door. Sometimes she brought him bread baked from a curious kind of meal made of pounded seeds.

Once, too, when a sudden storm had chilled the air, she kindled a fire for him within a smaller cave, receding like a fire-place into the rocky wall opposite the opening. It was a long and tedious process which the man watched curiously. First, kneeling on the

ground, she rubbed together two dry willow sticks until a little pile of dust had gathered. Then, still stooping, she struck two flints together until at last a spark fell into the dust. Some dry leaves were dropped upon the tiny blaze, then twigs, and lo, a fire!

In spite of himself the Englishman smiled, though a softer feeling shown in his eyes. How beautiful and yet how childish she looked kneeling there with the anxious pucker between her brows. Poor little princess, how very hard she worked to serve him!

"It takes a long time, Wildenai," he observed, "dost thou try it often?"

"Never for myself," she answered gravely. "I have no need. But I do it gladly for you." She smiled brightly back at him, then rose and moved swiftly to the doorway. "Another thing I do for you today. Wait!"

And when she returned a few minutes later she brought with her, carefully wrapped in cool green leaves, a fish freshly caught that morning.

"A brook trout, on my word, such as I have often taken in the streams at home!" exclaimed Lord Harold, amazed.

"I got it far up the canyon before the sun was risen," she answered, delighted at his surprise.

This, having quickly dressed it, she wrapped again in leaves and placed under the hot ashes to bake, and it being, evidently, a feast out of the ordinary, a merry-making to which a third guest might be bidden, suddenly Wildenai left the cavern again to return this time with a tiny gray fox perched familiarly upon her shoulder.

" 'Tis Onatoa, senor Englishman," she announced, gently stroking the bushy tail of the little creature as it lay about her neck.

But from his vantage point above his rival, Onatoa merely sniffed disdainfully with his sharp black nose. He looked far from friendly.

The princess laughed softly.

He does not know you yet," she defended her pet. "He will soon learn to love you, too."

"I will catch fish with thee next time thou goest," declared young Harold later as they ate together. "There's no reason I can see why I should stay mewed up forever in this cave. I fear not Indians! No, not even Torquam, thy father, himself."

For an instant Wildenai seemed alarmed. Then she laughed.

"You are afraid of nothing. I knew it!" she exclaimed with pride. "Nor would there be much danger. We will go to the other side of the island where the waves run high and the cliffs are tall and black. There will I show you the nests of the great eagles, and the antelope leaping among the rocks. And,—who can tell?" she laughed again with child-like pleasure, "perhaps we shall find a white otter!"

And, true to her word, he heard at dawn next day outside the cavern the whistle of a blackbird, a signal early contrived between them. She deemed it best, she explained, to start thus early that the darkness might conceal them until they had passed well beyond the outskirts of the village. But this danger overcome, they spent the whole day rambling fearlessly among the hills,—a long, idle, happy day. Up many a dim trail winding back into the canyons the princess led him. Through golden thickets of wild mustard they passed, coming, when he least expected it, upon glimpses of the summer sea framed between the branches of knarled old oak trees.

"They are low and crooked, and they spread themselves over the ground as do our English oaks," the young nobleman informed her.

As Wildenai had promised they discovered, poised high among the crags of the wild southern shore, the great eagles of which she had told him, measuring easily, from wing-tip to wing-tip, fully a dozen feet. The white otter, rarest and most valuable of all the game hunted by her people, eluded them, but many a small gray fox slipped away among the bushes, leaving the Englishman tingling for the chase.

At twilight, as they made their way back to the cavern, they came upon a tiny lake lying asleep within the crater of a dead volcano. From the sides little clouds of ashes rose, floating softly away on the breezes of evening. The princess gathered a handful and murmuring some musical words in her own tongue she threw them into the air.

"And would it be amiss for me to ask what 'tis you do?" questioned her companion, observing her closely.

"I was sending a prayer to Wakan-ate, the Great Spirit," she replied quietly.

"A prayer,—and borne to heaven on the wings of ashes!" He seemed amused. "But what hast thou to pray for, oh fair princess?"

Her cheeks glowing with quick color, she replied: "It were not fitting that any maiden tell for what she prays!"

The words were spoken with such gravity that the young man flushed under the rebuke.

When she left him at the doorway of the cavern that evening she said as she made a gay little gesture of farewell: "Today the land, but tomorrow we shall find still more beautiful things that lie hidden under the deep waters. You shall see!"

And once again with dawn she came. This time it was the splash of a paddle that brought him to the opening in the rock.

"Aloho-ate, lazy one!" she called gaily from below. "Make haste! The world is always loveliest while it lies waiting for the sun!"

That day, perhaps, from among them all, lived longest within the memory of young Harold,—the porpoises playing fearlessly around her canoe as the princess, with graceful, effortless strokes, paddled around one after another

of the pointed tongues of rock; the flying fish, skimming the surface of the ocean until, by virtue of their speed alone, they rose like gleaming bows of silver from the foam. Intent to show him all her treasures, Wildenai guided him to a quiet stretch of water lying close to shore within the shadow of tall cliffs which rose at that point with precipitous abruptness from the sea itself.

"Here are my gardens that grow under the water," she explained, as they glided above the spot. "Look well at them. They are most beautiful."

And gazing down at her command through the clear green into the luminous depths below, he caught glimpses of these gardens of the sea where goldfish darted like tropical birds among the branches of tall tree-like stalks of swaying seaweed, and strange shapes of jade and blue floated in the shadows.

"Is it not wonderful?" she asked.

"It is indeed, my Wildenai," he answered earnestly. "Never in all my travels, methinks, have I seen aught before like this your island here! It seems to me indeed a charmed land, a kind of magic isle!"

One day it rained, the last belated rain of winter. But even the storm brought pleasures of its own, for, seated on the pile of skins beside him, the little gray fox curled contentedly at her feet, Wildenai worked at her loom. Within its dull-colored warp a blanket, woven in a strange design of mingled red, and black, and white, grew slowly beneath her busy fingers.

For hours the maiden drew the short woolen threads in and out while the young man, stretched lazily upon the ground, told her many a tale of the England he had left. Then, quite without warning, she ceased her work and sat pensively watching through the opening in the rocks the long gray swell of the sea.

"And what is it now, my princess?" laughed young Harold. "The pattern is not yet finished, nor is the rain abated."

"Ah, senor Harold lord," wistfully replied the girl, "I was but wishing I had been born one of those same fair English maids with the eyes of blue and golden hair you tell about. Then would you love me even as you do them!" she added artlessly, and leaned her chin upon

her hand, considering. A secret trembled on her lips.

"And how if I were Spanish born?" she questioned, and lifted hesitating, frightened eyes to his, "dark to look at, that I know well, but even so, the white man's kind of princess, who also has a throne?"

And all unwitting Lord Harold answered scornfully, "Spanish! Say no such word to me! The English hate the Spanish!" Fiercely he caught up a pebble and sent it whirling out across the water. "Even now their robber king plans his huge armada to take our queen and rule our land, but that, by the holy virgin herself, shall never be! Sooner will every drop of blood in bonny England be spilt. Never could I make thee understand how much I hope to be at home before he comes! Spanish indeed! Nay, never let me hear the hateful word again!"

Then, noting her puzzled, downcast face, with the impulsive changeableness which had so endeared him to her, he caught one little brown hand and raised it to his lips.

"But I do love thee even as thou art, my Wildenai," he told her with the careless assur-

ance of one much older speaking to a child. "Is not a wild rose sweet as any garden bloom? Nay, methinks 'tis often sweeter!"

Again he laughed and the little princess laughed with him now, for into her heart at his words had come a happiness so unlooked for and so wildly sweet as wholly to bewilder her. Quickly she rose, struck by a sudden thought, and running to the farthermost corner of the cavern she brushed aside a pile of leaves and lifted some stones, disclosing at length a box fashioned from the choicest cedar. Out of it, while the Englishman watched with wondering eyes, she drew a garment made of creamy doe-skin, deeply fringed and trimmed besides with strings of wampum,—the polished fragments of abalone shells and many-colored beads. Silently she brought it to him and when he touched it admiringly, for the dress was beautiful. "It is my marriage robe," she told him gravely.

That night, while the rain tapped softly at her tepee, the princess dreamed of a wondrous land beyond the sea where proudly she walked by her white chief's side and fair women with

braided, golden hair spoke kind words of welcome, smiling at her out of sweet blue eyes.

Then, without warning, came the end of all her dreams. Hurrying along the beach at sunset only a few days later, Wildenai caught the first glimpse of the returning vessel as it stole around a distant point. For the space of a second her heart stood still, then throbbed wildly, but whether with joy or pain she could not herself have told. One question only demanded all her thought. Should she let Lord Harold know? Perhaps the great white captain would not remember their bay. Perhaps, —her breath came fast,—perhaps the ship, unseen by anyone, would pass and Lord Harold remain behind content. With hands tight-clenched she watched the distant sail, fear growing in her eyes. Yet she knew that she would tell him. Nothing else was honorable. This, surely, he must decide for himself.

But tidings of such moment outran even her swift feet. She found him buckling on his sword-belt, in his eyes the glad light of some

trapped bird which sees the door of its cage suddenly open.

"The ship—" she began with sinking heart.

"Yes, yes, I know! I saw it!" he answered, a fever of impatience in his voice. " 'Tis Drake. I knew he dared not leave me! 'Twill soon be too close in. Needs not he risk his safety. I must go before he gains the shore."

The princess hesitated. What meant that strange heaviness at her heart? Was he not still her brave, true warrior,—her great white chief? Had he not told her that he loved her? Crossing to where he stood she bowed herself before him until her silver fillet touched his feet.

"I, too!" she whispered, "I shall go to England with thee!"

And at her words, within the little cavern there came a silence to be felt. In undisguised dismay the Englishman gazed at her where she knelt. Then:

"By the holyrood!" he muttered aghast, "She must have thought,—God only knows what she must have thought!"

He glanced hurriedly toward the doorway and back again, ashamed. Then even such impatience as was his gave way, for the moment at least, to something more chivalric. He stooped and patted awkwardly the smooth black head.

"Come, Wildenai, little wild rose, look up and speak to me. I must be going!"

But still the maid lay prostrate, clasping close his rough buskins in her little brown hands. Never in all his life had Lord Harold been so sorely uncomfortable. How was it possible she had ever imagined that he could take her with him,—that he had meant so much? Resentment grew within him at the thought, yet strangely mingled always with something far more tender. Hastily he considered, his heart torn between the desire not to wound her and dread of what he knew she wanted. To be sure the maid was beautiful, with the softened beauty of a moonlit night in summer, her eyes beneath her dusky hair like stars between the branches of dark trees, her voice that of the forest stream when it sings itself to sleep. Yet past all doubt he knew that not one among the gorgeous throng

that crowded about Elizabeth would ever see that beauty, no English ear take heed to hear the music of her voice. Nay, he could even, as he thought of it, picture the amazement of the great queen, could hear her scornful laughter, should he present, to help adorn her court, a savage Indian girl! No, a thousand times no! Such disgrace he could not suffer. Nor was the maid herself, so he defended himself, fitted for such a life. Soon would she be as unhappy in England as he would be to have her there. Besides, she was but a child. Else had she never so far forgot all womanly dignity as to force herself upon him, and being but a child she would soon forget. Gently he made to raise her to her feet.

"Wildenai, little wild rose," he began again, "what thou hast asked of me thou dost well know thyself is an unheard of thing. Much as I owe to thee, and well know I that 'tis so much I never can repay it; still for thine own sweet sake 'tis not in this way thy reward must come. The long journey and the strange new life would kill thee, Wildenai." Having once begun he stumbled on, but half aware of how each word he uttered hurt her, eager

only to have done with the whole sorry scene. "Thou art but a little wild flower. Thou couldst not live away from this, thy sunny island. Can'st thou not understand, my Wildenai?"

He paused, waiting for a reply; but the maiden answered nothing. Silent she lay as though in very truth she were a wild flower tossed to earth and trampled upon by some uncaring foot.

At last the man could bear it no longer. Forcibly he loosed her hands and stepped back. For a moment longer he lingered, looking down upon her in mingled impatience and regret; then, turning abruptly, he passed hastily out of the cavern and down the trail to the beach.

Still the girl lay motionless. It was as if every sense were stunned, all power of thought suspended except to grasp the one fact that made her whole world empty,—he was gone! As in a dream she heard the grating of the pebbles when he pushed his boat into the water, heard the clank of the oars as they dropped into the oar-locks. Even yet she did not move. Then, after many minutes, she crept to the

opening and searched the sea with eyes almost too dim with tears to find that for which she sought. But yes, there it was,—a black speck against the golden sunset. She watched until she had seen the distant vessel put about, making for the open sea. Ah, now she knew that he was safe aboard,—no need had they to come farther into shore. Yet still she waited, straining her eyes to see the ship sink slowly beneath the horizon. One last glint of sunlight against a white sail, and it was gone.

Then at once she rose, and moving quietly about the little cavern, she put all in perfect order with touch as tender as that of a mother preparing for its last sleep some little child. Here was the basket he had helped to weave, here the mat on which he had lain. Her fingers lingered caressingly on each thing that he had touched. There in the corner still stood the olla in which she had brought him water. How amused he had been that she could carry it on her head all the way up the hill from the spring without so much as spilling one drop! But that was all past now.

When at last everything was finished she gave the little rock-walled room one long, lin-

gering look, the look of one who would carry in his heart the image of what he beholds all the rest of his life. Then she, too, made her way through the doorway into the deepening dusk.

On the beach below, squatted within the opened flap of his tepee, Torquam, mighty chief of the Mariposa, smoked his evening pipe. A wonderful pipe it was, long and delicately fashioned, inlaid with iridescent fragments of shell. Yet instantly he laid it aside as the slender form of his daughter darkened the doorway.

"Ah, Wildenai, little wild rose, welcome art thou as sunshine after rain!" His eyes lighted with the tenderness never seen there by any other than this motherless girl. He stretched his hand to her and the princess came silently and knelt before him.

"My father," she said firmly, though in so low a tone that Torquam bent to hear. "Oh, father, thou art always wise! Thou only knowest best. I come to thee to tell that I will

wed Cabrillo. I will wed with him whenever thou dost choose!"

Taking her face between his hands, Torquam gazed long and searchingly into the sorrowful eyes of his daughter.

"And thou art wise to do so, my beloved one," he said at last. "He will make to thee a good husband." In his voice was the keen understanding of a father. "He will be kind to thee and heal thy wounded heart, my daughter. Don Cabrillo is a good man," he repeated solemnly.

Miss Hastings Brings It to an End

PART II

Miss Hastings Brings It to an End

Centuries passed, and again, with the same sweet suddenness as in the days gone by, spring came to Catalina. Guests of the St. Catherine, lounging on its wide verandahs, gazed across a sunlit sea to where the faint cloud that was San Jacinto hovered, the merest ghost of a mountain, above the misty mainland. Along the broad board-walk leading down to Avalon benches, shaded by bright-striped awnings, flaunted an invitation to every passing tourist. Strings of Japanese lanterns bobbed merrily above the narrow village streets. Everywhere were laughter and movement and color from the bathing beaches, dotted with gay umbrellas—even to the last yacht anchored round the point.

To the man making slow progress down the crowded wharf from the afternoon boat this holiday world into which he thus suddenly stepped, presented an appearance so different

from that he had pictured as almost to bewilder him. At sight of the jaunty little motorbus waiting to haul him up the winding grade to the hotel, he actually hesitated. Yet seldom before, to his knowledge, had he found it difficult to adapt himself to an unexpected situation.

"Hotel St. Catherine! Bus to the hotel, sir?"

Other guests, more certain of their intentions, pushed impatiently against him, and presently he found himself, wedged well toward the middle of the long seat, chugging comfortably up the hill. Still half-daunted, he gazed about him. It was all of it charming to be sure, fascinating even; yet, could this festive summering place be the Avalon of his dreams? Was this the quaint village of Spanish times, reaching back still further through dimly remembered Indian lore to a world lost now except to legend? Yet it was for the sake of a mere legend, a fanciful tale handed down in his family through many a generation, that he had made the long journey from New York to California, nor—and here he set his lips with

dogged determination, did he intend to return until he had found that for which he searched.

It was now something over two years since Harrison Blair, then fresh from Yale, had astonished both those who wished him well and those who, for various envious reasons, did not, with the wholly unreasonable success of his first book. For, to those who did not understand, his sudden fame had seemed all the more surprising in that it rested upon nothing more substantial than a slender volume of Indian verse. So unusual, however, had been his treatment of this well-worn subject as to call forth more than a little comment from even the most conservative of critics. The Brush and Pen had hastened to confer upon him an honorary membership. Cadmon, magic weaver of Indian music, had written a warm letter of appreciation. And, most precious tribute of all, the Atlantic Monthly had become interested in his career.

To be sure, it was nothing more than might have been expected of a man whose undergraduate work in English had aroused the reluctant wonder of more than one instructor. Nevertheless, the fact that he pulled stroke on

the 'varsity crew had somewhat blinded other contemporaries to his more scholarly attainments. Nor had anyone thought it probable, because of his father's wealth, that Blair, in any event, would feel called upon to do much more than make a frolic of life. No one, indeed, had been more taken aback than had his father to find him, a year after graduation, drudging over the assistant editor's desk of a struggling magazine the payroll of which, to put it mildly, offered no financial inducements.

"It's good practice for me, though,—quickest way to learn," was all he vouchsafed when the older man remonstrated.

Yet, had that same father, shrewd capitalist that he was, but taken the trouble to reason back from premises evident enough, he might have been the first to realize that this tall son of his, with the keen gray eyes and a face the strength of which was but increased by the high cheek bones and squarely molded chin, was scarcely the type of man to sit idly by enjoying the fruits of another's labor.

And now, after two years more of grinding apprenticeship, he had in mind something much bigger than the slender volume of verse,

—an adventure into authorship more suited to his metal,—a story for which an intense personal sympathy would furnish fitting atmosphere, with the final spur to his ambition a letter from the Atlantic even at the moment stowed safely away in his pocket.

Some two hours later, after an unexpectedly excellent dinner in the luxurious dining room, he sauntered over to the hotel desk. There was no more than the faintest probability that a clerk of the St. Catherine would be able to tell him how to reach a secret cavern bower above the Bay of Moons; still, he had to enter an opening wedge somewhere. The one man on duty was for the moment occupied with another guest, and Blair, lighting his after-dinner cigar, prepared with leisurely patience to await his turn.

The guest happened to be a young woman, rather pretty, he casually decided, although her greatest claim to beauty lay more, perhaps, in the swift changes in expression of which her face was capable, than in any actual regularity of line. For lack of anything better to do, Blair watched idly her encounter with the

clerk. There appeared to be some kind of misunderstanding.

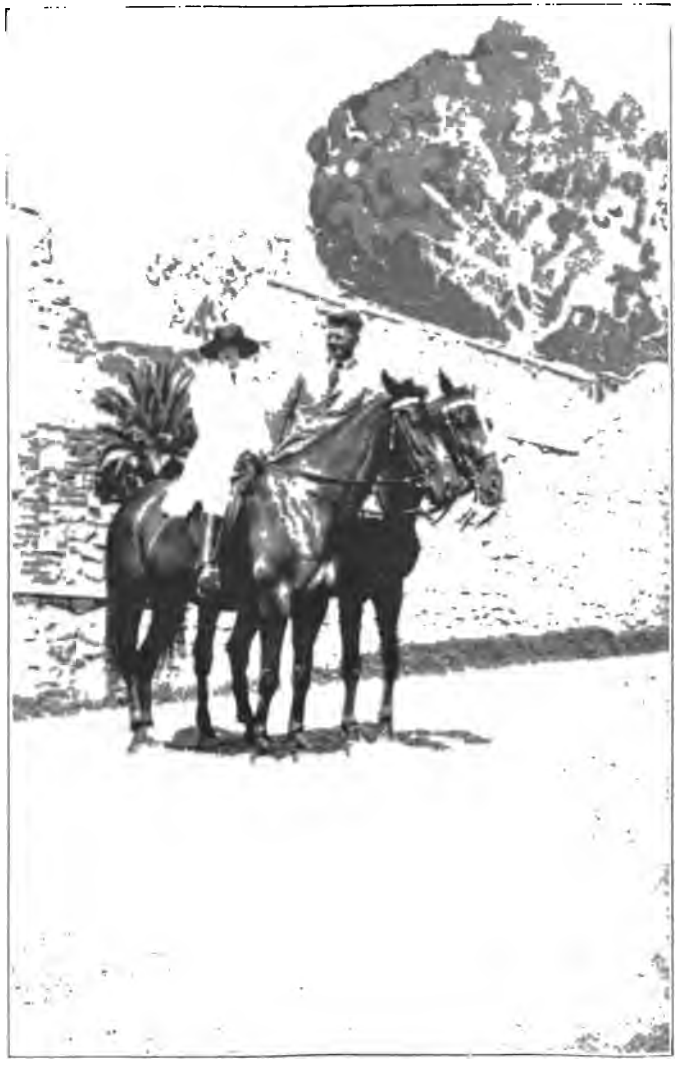
"Awfully sorry it's happened that way, Miss Hastings," the man behind the desk was saying. He lifted with genuine reluctance the key she had just laid down. "We'd be mighty sorry to interfere with your work, but those small rooms always do go first. You know that yourself."

"I hadn't heard about it, though. I didn't know they were all gone." Her voice quivered with disappointment.

Blair, whose vocation taught him a certain technical sympathy, shot a swift glance at her. She couldn't be more than twenty-two or thereabouts, he decided less casually, and went on to observe her still further. She wore a shabby, broad-brimmed hat much faded as if from constant exposure to the sun, but the shadows in the coil of hair beneath were warmly golden.

"Couldn't you find a room down in the village somewhere,—at Mrs. Merrill's perhaps?" suggested the clerk.

"But Mrs. Merrill isn't here this spring." In spite of its quiver the voice was very sweet.



"I wished for something about a rose," he said mischievously.

"No," she started to turn away, "I'll have to put it off again, I suppose. I've looked everywhere."

She took a step or two, hesitated, then returned to the desk.

"You're positive there isn't a single one of the small rooms left?" she pleaded. "I wouldn't care how far back it was,—anything would do. You can't think how I hate to give up. I had so hoped to finish it this time!"

The man shook his head.

"No, we're absolutely full just now. Later on there might be something,—after the season is over."

"But that will be after school begins," answered the girl bitterly. "I can't work at all then!" and catching up a bag fully as shabby as the hat, she hurried away.

"Who is she?" asked Blair abruptly, overlooking for the moment his original purpose in seeking the man.

"School-teacher from Pasadena," replied the clerk briefly. "Teaches art in some private school over there, I believe." He eyed Blair amusedly. "Think you've met her before somewhere?"

Blair allowed his annoyance to show. "No, never laid eyes on her till just now. But I couldn't help feeling a bit sorry for her," he persisted. "She seemed so sort of cut up. What's the trouble?"

"I'm sorry for her myself," declared the man on the other side as he hung the returned key on its board. "This is the third time that poor little woman's had to leave before she could finish what she came for on account of the expense. But what can we do?" He shrugged his shoulders. "The St. Catherine isn't exactly a Y. W. C. A."

"What is it she's trying to do?"

Amusement deepened in the man's eyes.

"She's supposed to be painting Indians."

"Indians!" To the amazement of the other man Blair suddenly leaned forward, his eyes agleam with interest.

"But I didn't know there were any around here."

"There aren't."

"Then how—?"

"Makes 'em up out of her head, I guess. I never heard that she had even a model."

"But—but what I want to know is why she comes here at all?" The situation seemed to Blair to offer possibilities, yet he was thoroughly puzzled. "I met a fellow on the train who does that sort of thing, but he always goes to the desert to paint,—at least he said he did."

"Yes, they do mostly. Probably he meant Taos,—whole nest of artists at Taos."

"Well, but why in thunder then—?"

The clerk smiled skeptically.

"Why, you see, it's something like this. Miss Hastings' bent on being an illustrator,—pays better than teaching, I suppose, or—well, at any rate, that's what she's aiming for,—and she has an idea that if she can only get a series of pictures,—several of them on the same subject, you understand,—accepted by one of those Eastern magazines, she can soon work in with some big publisher and get an order. She told us all about it one night last winter when she was over."

"But in heaven's name, why Indians?" persisted Blair.

"Because she thinks she's found some good material here. She told me about that, too. Seems there's an old legend connected

with Catalina, about an Indian princess and a cavern. The princess died of a broken heart or something of the sort, I believe she said. I never heard the particulars myself. Nobody else, either, seems to know anything about it. But Miss Hastings says there's quite a story, and she's got it all down pat from A to Z. She's using it for her series."

A porter brought up some newcomers and Blair stepped aside. But the moment his man was at leisure again he cornered him at once. An idea had come to him, an idea almost dazzling in its possibilities.

"You say she hasn't finished her series yet?"

"Beg pardon? Oh, the teacher?" The man shook his head. "Evidently not from what she said just now. She never stays long enough really to put it over. Every few months she bobs up over a week-end, but that doesn't give her time even to visit some of the places she's after. She never seems to get much more than started before she has to go home again."

For a moment Blair smoked in silence. Then:

"Look here," he cut in abruptly, "You split my suite and give her one of my rooms."

The man's eyebrows rose in surprise.

"Her? What do you mean?"

Blair made an impatient gesture.

"Why, this Miss—the teacher, you know. Didn't you just say you hadn't any room for her? Well, I've got three, you know."

"Yes, but that's altogether a different proposition. You made your reservation weeks ago."

"But you could still give her one of them, couldn't you?"

Clerks in large hotels listen with patience to a vast number of strange proposals, but at this from Blair, the man opposite eyed him in unflattering amazement.

"But you said, when you wired, you wanted the extra room to work in," he objected, "and you'll remember, Mr. Blair, that you were pretty emphatic about it, too, at the time. We went to all kinds of trouble to fix that up for you."

"I can get along all right without it, though," coolly observed his changeable guest, "and I'd rather she'd have it. It's possible to

split suites here, isn't it?" he persisted. "They do at most hotels."

"It's possible, of course." Across the desk the eyes of the two men met squarely. "That part of it's easy enough. But why? and who's going to pay for it?"

"*I'm* going to pay for it! What did you suppose?" exploded Blair. "It's worth that and a lot more to me just now to keep her from getting away. Oh, I'm in earnest all right. I mean it! Look here! Can't you see how that woman can be a perfect gold mine to me? You know enough about my work to understand that I'm really out here after Indians myself, and she—well, I'll wager a cool thousand there isn't a spot on this whole island that ever dreamed of seeing an Indian that she doesn't know all about!"

The clerk nodded. "But—"

"But nothing!" Impatiently Blair brushed aside all objections. "Why, I hadn't the remotest idea how I was going to get started. It's a rattling piece of good luck, and we'll fix it up right now!"

"Yes, but—" Still the other man hesitated. "It sounds all right enough,—from your

end of it especially, but you'd better see her first. She's a proud little piece,—doesn't like obligations of any kind,—and a stranger,—a man—I'm sorry to discourage you, but I don't believe she'll have a thing to do with it."

In Blair's eyes impatience threatened to become something more emphatic.

"It's a business proposition pure and simple," he argued. "She gives me all the information she's been able to get together, and I pay her expenses while she does it. That gives her a chance to finish her own work, don't you see? A mighty good proposition for her, too, I should say, and if she doesn't see it that way herself,—why,—well, she isn't as intelligent as she looks, that's all!"

"Providing you can persuade her it *is* just business. I'd advise you to talk with her first, just the same. And you'll have to be quick about it, too. She's planning to wait in the village tonight for the morning boat, and she'll be starting down about now."

Outside was one of those radiant nights intended for dreams and the makers of dreams.

Over an ocean white with light long breakers rolled crests gleaming with silver that fell in soft thunder on the beach. Miss Hastings, hurrying along the board-walk to the village, glanced at them and looked quickly away.

"Oh, I say!" came a voice out of the darkness behind her, "if you don't mind, hold on there a minute, will you? Wait for me, please!" The voice was that of a man, pleasant, but exceedingly determined. Without so much as turning her head Miss Hastings quickened her steps.

But it was of no use. Whoever her pursuer might be, he was even then at her side.

"I beg your pardon," breathlessly he began again, "but I've been chasing you all the way down from the hotel. I want you to come right back there with me. I have a proposal to make to you."

Even in the darkness he could see how the girl's eyes blazed.

"I never listen—" she began hotly, "to proposals from people I don't know," she had meant to add, but he gave her no time.

"It will mean the biggest chance for your pictures you've ever had," he broke in. "Now, listen!"

And, to her complete surprise, Miss Hastings suddenly found herself doing that very thing.

"There are a lot of things I've got to find out right away," continued the astonishing stranger, "and the clerk up there tells me you're painting a series of Indian portraits."

The little art teacher gazed at him fascinated. What manner of man could this be, she wondered.

'I don't see the connection—" Coldness struggled with curiosity in her voice.

"Listen!" With uplifted, peremptory hand again he stopped her. Nor is it safe to say that any book agent, watching the door slowly closing upon him, ever talked faster, or more rigidly to the point, than did Blair within the next few minutes.

"Perhaps you won't understand it all right off. I wouldn't expect that. But it's this way. I'm representing Harper's, and Houghton and Mifflin, and Dodd and Mead, and—several other firms" (to satisfy his conscience Blair contended with himself that he might as well as not have been their representative—a mere oversight on their part ought not to be allowed

to stand in his way), "and I'm out here to find the best illustrator I can lay hands on to do the pictures for some Indian stuff I'm getting into shape for one of 'em. I want to see your work. And, if I like it, I'll pay you well. And anyway, I'll pay every bit of the expense while you finish your series here if you'll tell me what you know about Wildenai!"

But, at the name, the girl beside him had given a low cry of utter amazement. She stopped short.

"Do you know it too, then?" she gasped. "How did you hear about it?"

"Oh, I've known it for years," replied Blair carelessly. "Some of it I've known all my life. But look here now. Is it a bargain? —about your helping me, I mean?"

Before he left her, an hour or so later, every detail had been arranged. Miss Hastings had meekly agreed to return to the hotel in the morning. Blair would pay her expenses and something he called a retaining fee besides. That would make an extra fifty dollars, —she smiled to herself in the dark,—a new winter suit at least, and perhaps one or two matinees if she managed! All this for the in-

formation she could give him about the island and its history. The various points in their contract spun dizzily in her dazed brain. No spot known to legend to which it was possible to conduct him should remain unvisited. Four hours out of every day were pledged without fail to his interests. The rest of the time she might have for her own work. It had all come about so unexpectedly, and was altogether so extraordinary that, after he had gone, his new employe, stretched uncomfortably upon a narrow cot in the tent of a fellow teacher, spent the remainder of the night in imaginary interviews with Eastern publishers regarding impossible royalties. She was far too excited to sleep.

And, for a week, the arrangement worked very well,—almost too well. Every day brought with it some new adventure, and every adventure became a pleasure.

Mounted at Blair's expense on more or less energetic ponies, for from the first he had insisted that horses were a necessary part of their business equipment, they cantered gaily along the shady canyon trails, or over the sunlit slopes sheeted in pale lavender wherever the wild lilacs were in bloom. Often, emerging

from some thicket of dwarf oak they caught glimpses of a sapphire sea held between red, twisted branches of manzanita as in a frame. About them rang the music of the meadow larks. Merry shouts of bathers floated up from the beaches far below, mingled with the distant click of golf balls on the greens.

For the whole of a golden day they chartered a sailboat from one, Capt. Warren, and rounding the yellow headlands under his lazy guidance, they went to examine the Ning Po, the ancient Chinese barge stranded, no one knew how many hundreds of years before, among the rocks off the isthmus.

"Fascinating old place," observed Blair gazing, his eyes aglow with interest, around the mediaeval cabin. "Don't doubt a dozen murders at least were pulled off in this one room!"

"Oh yes, of course," eagerly echoed his assistant. "It's absolutely unique!"

Her gaze, as bright with interest as his own, rested upon Blair himself. She was considering, absent-mindedly, how becoming white trousers can be to most men, especially when they are reasonably dark themselves. But,—her glance travelled upward,—how un-

usually dark he was, and his hair,—yes, without question, the straightest and blackest she had ever seen. Yet it seemed in some indefinable way to become him,—to belong, as it were, to his type. Leaning her elbows meditatively upon the rusty anchor, her chin in her hands, she silently appraised him. He really was a handsome man, she decided, and clever, too, of the sort who does things in the world! A dreamy light grew within her eyes.

It was only two or three evenings later when, on their way back from the site of an historic Indian village on the other side of the island, they walked their horses slowly around the Wishbone Loop, the ostensible reason being that, as Blair had already discovered, it commanded the widest view of the ocean at sunset.

He was the first to speak when they struck again into the main trail.

"I wished for something about a rose, a wild rose,—want to guess?" He eyed her mischievously.

"Hush,—mustn't tell!" she laughed. "Your wish won't come true if you tell." Then, for no reason at all, she blushed.

Never, in truth, during her twenty-three years of working, and scrimping, and going without, had life shown to the little art teacher so fair and generous a side, seemed so extravagantly joyous an affair as during that magic week. The spending of money, it was easy to see, meant little or nothing to Blair. But that was the least of his attractions, for, to the girl herself, mere wealth for its own sake had never appealed. The charm lay rather in the genial broadness of his view of things, the strength of reasoning behind the few opinions he put forward, his reticence, and quiet modesty. In these dwelt the spell that swept her into an almost delirious enjoyment of his society. For, all unknown to herself, like many another woman in like condition, she had needed a change of people. In the cramped life of a private school men played but little part, and the men who were most worth while, almost no part at all. Instinctively, in time, she had wearied of little girls and their lessons. Sorely had she craved the stimulus which only the companionship of congenial men can give. Of this fact, however, she had been even less aware.

One crisp morning, seated in a diminutive wicker cart behind a discontented pony, they searched out Chicken John's cabin on the mesa behind the golf links.

"Not that it has anything to do with Indians," she apologized, "only I want you to see him. He's such a character, so nice and untidy and queer!"

As a result of this expedition they brought away with them what old John designated a "plump little fry" to be served at the cosy table for two in the sunniest window of the dining room, a luxury which Blair had likewise confiscated in the interests of business.

And so for seven glorious days they tramped the fragrant hills, or sailed a sea as softly blue as though fallen fresh that morning from the cloudless heaven above. In the warmth and glow of his friendship the starved heart of the little art teacher opened like some hot-house flower carried suddenly into the wide outdoors. And when at last the week drew to an end, their work, both his and hers, was still unfinished, so that there was nothing else to do but to live on through another fully as wonderful.

Blair himself took things much more for granted, and even when their talk strayed farthest afield it was plain to the girl that his mind never fully lost sight of the purpose for which he had come. His work stood always first, while,—she blushed to own it even to herself,—she had sometimes entirely forgotten her own.

At the end of the third week they had seen almost everything he considered essential and at times she sensed in his manner, even when he was least aware of it, a kind of repressed impatience. She knew what it meant and shivered. Presently he would leave her, and life would become again the same dull round of work. Only one spot of real importance remained unvisited,—the cavern bower above the Bay of Moons. Of this he had spoken frequently, and well she knew he held it the climax of his search.

But for reasons best known to herself Miss Hastings put off from day to day this final expedition until Blair began to chaff at the delay.

"That's really the one place I came to see!" he told her more than once. "After I've been there I think I can go."

"But we've planned Middle Ranch for to-day," she would answer evasively, or, "This is the best time to see Orazaba; it's so clear this morning. That's the mountain, you know, where the Indians carved out their ollas. Some of them are still there, only half cut away. It would be too bad for you to miss that."

At length, however, there came a day when excuses would do no longer.

"We've waited long enough," he declared that morning over their coffee, "Besides, I may have to go now in a few days."

And although at his words the sunshine of her new world faded suddenly away, yet the little teacher kept a brave front. She even laughed carelessly.

"Men are so impatient," she teased, "But we'll go today."

Nevertheless, it was not until the rose of sunset rested among the hills that at last they found themselves on the crest of the tall cliff which commanded so wide a stretch of the ocean and the shimmering valleys below.

"It reminds one of the Bay of Naples," observed Blair, pausing to scan the rocky coast-line against which, far beneath them, the foam-

ing breakers threw themselves. He shaded his eyes with his hand and looked far out to sea. "What a wonderful place for a watch tower it would have made!"

"It had one once," softly replied the girl, "Wildenai's watch tower!"

Blair turned, their eyes met, and he smiled.

"It's been splendid to have you with me all these days," he said, "I've been wanting to tell you. You've been more of a help than you'll ever know." And then, after a pause, "It's because you care so much about the story yourself, I suppose, that you've been such an inspiration to me."

Something in the girl's heart seemed suddenly to snap.

"It's because I care more about your work, and—and you. You are so wonderful!" she broke forth impulsively, and stood before him crimson with confusion. For a second, which seemed to her an age, there was silence. Then he spoke and, in her bitter humiliation, his voice sounded strained and cold.

"Shall we go in?" he asked.

"I am sketching Pal holding the gaff," she explained.

Silently he parted the tangle of manzanita that for centuries had veiled the secrets of the princess, and stood aside for her to enter. Wildly the little art teacher glanced about her. This moment to which she had so looked forward, and yet had dreaded as much because it meant the end,—this moment which might, nevertheless, have meant much to them both even though it were the end, she herself had spoiled! All its delicate beauty changed to a sordid suspicion, it lay in ruins now because of her thoughtless words. She dared not guess at what he must be thinking! For a desperate second she considered flight. Then proudly she raised her head. One more thing, at least, about her now he should learn!

"Did you know—?" she began, then broke off irresolute.

Blair glanced at her and again their eyes met. This time he did not smile.

"Know what?" he asked.

She laughed with embarrassment.

"It really isn't of any interest to you, but—" and again she paused.

"Suppose you let me be the judge of that," he suggested stiffly. "You're making me hor-

ribly curious, you know. You can't very well drop the subject now." He was evidently making an effort at pleasantry.

She flushed brightly.

"Of course it couldn't be of the slightest importance to anyone except myself," she explained. Then, as if doubting her courage to continue long, she hurried on, "but one reason I take such an interest in—your work is because I'm a direct descendant of Lord Harold myself. He became the Duke of Norfolk afterward, you know, but Hastings was always the family name." She flashed him a haughty glance, a pride that changed to wide-eyed surprise as she noted his amazement.

"Not really?" He had turned abruptly and in his eyes there was a curious expression, almost of alarm. "How extraordinary,—how perfectly extraordinary!"

"Why extraordinary?" That her cup of humiliation might brim to the full, resentment was added to confusion. "You consider me unworthy, then, of having had nobility among my ancestry? But, just the same, there was nothing strange about it. The colonies were chiefly English, you remember!" He smiled

at her sarcasm. "The duke married one of Elizabeth's ladies-in-waiting after he went home and there was a younger son, and *he* had a younger son, and after a long time one of them came over to Virginia just like anybody else. They have always been good, loyal, highly respected American citizens," she told him fiercely, "and I'm proud of them! Besides—" with reckless emphasis, "I've always felt so sorry for Wildenai."

But at this point, quite incomprehensibly, Blair broke into peals of laughter.

"And by and by, after a long, long time, one of these good, loyal, American citizens that we're both so proud of had a hot-tempered, most disloyal little daughter who intends to show her employer his proper place before she dismisses him! But why are you sorry for Wildenai?"

With mischievous eyes he searched her face.

She flushed, then, looking squarely at him, "Because she was impulsive like me, and just for that reason Lord Harold ran away and left her," she said. "He's the only one of them I never had any use for."

Blair wandered the length of the cavern and back before he replied.

"You think him a coward, I suppose." He still looked as though he wanted to laugh, yet something in his tone seared her outraged pride. He might as well have touched an iron to quivering flesh. "You ought to remember, however,—I mean every woman ought to remember,—that when a girl lets a man know that she cares for him she generally forfeits, then and there, whatever interest she may have had for him. Wildenai risked too much. Of course, in her case there was some excuse. She was only an untrained barbarian. But, under ordinary circumstances, I tell you there's nothing a man despises so much!"

What was done or said after that Miss Hastings never could have told. She was possessed of but one desire,—to get away, to go back to the hotel,—home, anywhere beyond the reach of his voice and his eyes. For the moment she hated him, and although Blair, conscience smitten at he knew not what, waited in the lobby a full hour before going in to dinner, she did not come down.

Up in her room, mechanically brushing her hair for the night, Miss Hastings stormily addressed the girl in the glass who stared so scornfully back at her.

"I tell you I don't care a thing about it! He probably thought he was justified in every word he said. He's probably smiling this very minute because he thinks he managed it so well! But he's a coward just the same, and I despise him,—I do despise him!" Her eyes brimming with tears, she fiercely repeated the word. "Well, he'll soon find out how much I really meant!"

Over and over she re-lived the short scene, —all of its humiliation, all of its hurt, seeking at every turn solace for her woman's pride.

"Naturally I wanted to help him all I could, to appear, at least, to be interested, especially when he was paying so much for it! It was only a business arrangement anyway," she continued bitterly, "nothing but business from start to finish, and if he doesn't know that yet, he'll find it out the very first thing tomorrow morning!"

And having tumbled into bed she lay staring into the dark, planning the details of a

campaign warranted either to cure or kill the enemy. Outside, a mocking bird, perched provokingly near her window, kept the night ringing with music. Resolutely she closed her ears to his song. But presently, through the faint fragrance of oleanders, other sounds began to penetrate,—the strains of the waltz to which they had danced only the night before. The little art teacher turned wearily over and cried herself to sleep.

On the morning which followed she rose very early, however, much too early to breakfast with Blair at the little table in the sunny corner. Instead, she ordered some coffee and toast at Jim's Waffle Shop in the village and was hard at work sketching on the wharf before eight o'clock. She had suddenly remembered a promise to sketch Capt. Warren's dog holding the gaff, a feat of which both Pal and his master were justifiably proud. Indeed, so long had the arrangement been made and so entirely had it been neglected, that no one was more surprised than the Captain himself at her unexpected appearance.

"But Pal and me ought to be at the Tuna Club in fifteen minutes, to take a party o' members out fishin'," he demurred. "You can't paint Pal in no quarter of an hour!"

"I'm sorry to have had to put it off so long," replied Miss Hastings crisply, "but I'm planning to go home in a few days now,—this afternoon probably. It's the only chance I shall have." And she prepared to make good the belated promise with such determination that, after a wistful glance or two across the slapping white caps, the old skipper meekly succumbed.

It was here Blair found her an hour or so later. Unceremoniously he placed himself in front of her, his hands in his pockets, and gave vent to a low whistle.

"Well, of all the—!"

"Oh, is it you, Mr. Blair?" she inquired in cool, sweet tones. "I thought most probably you'd gone! Didn't you say yesterday you intended to as soon as you'd seen the cavern?" Then, after a pause during which Blair said nothing, "I've been getting dreadfully behind with my own work, so I thought, if you didn't mind, I'd try to catch up a little this morning."

"Certainly not. Take all the time you want! We've about finished anyway, I guess." His coolness matched her own.

Another silence during which she painted furiously.

"I'm making a sketch of Pal holding the gaff," she ventured at length when the strain had become too uncomfortable.

"So I see."

This second tentative effort at conversation having flickered and gone out she bent again to her work, while Blair remained, looking down at her, in his eyes mingled amusement and resentment. What had he done, he wondered, to account for such a change? Or, perhaps, it was something he had not done. He tried again.

"Aren't we going for our ride this morning? It's a glorious day, and I have the refusal of the two best horses."

"No, I think not,—not this morning, thank you," she answered. In her voice was the same crisp sweetness. "I haven't time!"

With a shrug of pure bewilderment he backed away, then lingered a moment longer to watch the sketch take shape beneath her hurrying brush. That was the particular moment Miss Hastings chose for the final reckless stab.

"You're standing in my light," she said. "If you'd just as soon, please do go away, Mr.

Blair. It makes me nervous to have people looking over my shoulder when I'm trying to paint."

This was just a trifle more than Blair at the moment was prepared to stand. His eyes grew dark.

"Certainly," he replied icily. "So sorry to have bothered you at all. I only came down to tell you that I've decided to leave today. There's nothing more to keep me now, I think, and I'm rather anxious to get home. You'll find your check at the desk." And he sauntered away.

She did not go back to the hotel for luncheon. She had finished her sketch, yet, somehow, when the time came, she discovered that it would be quite impossible to enter the dining room. She found it equally impossible to take the afternoon boat herself. Instead, having clambered half way up the steep slope to the cavern, she watched from behind a flaming riot of wild nasturtians while, preceded by a hotel porter bearing bags and suit-cases, Blair boarded the Avalon for Los Angeles. He was going away, then, without even a word of farewell.

The heart of the little art teacher turned cold within her, so cold that she sank numbly into the red and gold tangle; nor did she look up again until the steamer, dipping below the horizon, had left only a trail of smoke to show where it disappeared. She had not believed that he would do quite that!

When evening came she went stoically in to dinner. There was no reason any longer for staying away. Sternly she kept her eyes from the vacant place opposite. Yet somehow she could not persuade herself that he was really gone. More than once she caught herself watching the door, half expecting to see him stroll in with apologies for tardiness and take his empty chair. When again the orchestra drifted suddenly into the waltz to which they had danced, she rose abruptly and left the room.

Well, she would go herself in the morning. She would settle everything and pack her things at once. She went to the desk to ask for the check. But there was nothing for her. No, the clerk assured her after much fumbling, Mr. Blair hadn't left anything, either in her box or his own. But,—the man stole a covert

glance at her downcast face,—he was still holding his rooms. Probably he meant to attend to it when he returned.

That he might not see the wild joy that leaped to her eyes, Miss Hastings turned with startling suddenness and fled upstairs. Safe in her own room she flung herself with tears and laughter on the bed. So that was the hand he was playing, was it?—the dear, wicked, unmanageable—! Of course he would have to be punished, — well punished! but — she laughed aloud for pure joy—the world was a radiant place once more, and nothing of any sort really mattered, because he was coming back.

But the next day went by, and the next, and he had not come. Day after day passed in an empty procession, yet no one of them brought that for which she waited. And there was nothing else to do. Work was out of the question. She could not sit still long enough. It became, instead, her sole occupation to linger each morning and afternoon on the verandah until the steamer from Los Angeles had rounded the point and crossed the bay in front of the hotel. Then, hidden behind the palms she

would watch until the last straggling tourist had left the pier. But still he did not come.

Doubt in every tormenting guise assailed her. Perhaps he had changed his mind and decided later not to return. Yet the clerk had said he meant to come back! Perhaps her check, sent by mail, was even now in her box. But she had not the courage to go again to the desk. Driven by alternate hope and fear she lost color, and she could not sleep. During seven miserable nights she planned to go back to Pasadena by the morning boat, and as many times she put it off. Yet, if he did return to find her waiting, what, then, would she have given him the right to think? But, on the other hand, if she went she might never see him again!

On the eighth day she took herself grimly in hand. No longer would she humiliate herself by any further delay. Wildenai had not waited, and even a school teacher can be as proud as an Indian princess! That very afternoon she would finish her sketch of the cavern. Then tomorrow she would go back to Pasadena and the long gray round of work. Desolately she wandered up the secret trail to Wil-

denai's bower. Never had her sympathy for the deserted princess been so keen. Perhaps, she mournfully considered, if the spirit of the Indian maiden still lingered there it might feel sympathy for her as well. Perhaps she, too, would find comfort in the spot where that other woman had paid an equal price for her impulsiveness.

The shadows in the little cavern were dark and cool and, laying aside her box of colors, for a long time she sat quite motionless, staring out to where the gulls drifted and glinted against the blue. She heard after a while the whistle of the approaching steamer but gave no heed. Lying back against the moss she had almost dropped asleep when something in the corner opposite attracted her attention. She sat up nervously and stared into the shadows. Was it only that the darkness was deeper over there, or was that really something propped against the wall? And had it moved?

In the years that followed she never knew how long she sat there after the stones had been lifted away, holding in her lap those shreds of torn white doeskin. Still caught together, though in tatters, by long strings of shells and

beads, they shone, a ghostly film of white from out the dimness. A breath, and the whole would have crumbled into dust. Yet the beads, she noticed, were still perfect as when strung by slim brown fingers centuries before. Only half believing it was not all of it a dream, she lifted them strand after strand. Then, suddenly, she gave a little cry. Somewhere from out the torn folds a slender chain had slipped. Trembling with a curiosity that bordered close on terror, she carried it to the light, and there it glowed, a glancing stream of crimson, in her hand.

"Wildenai's necklace!" she breathed, and hid her face.

There came the sound of a step outside. The manzanita branches were pushed impatiently aside and he stood before her.

The journey across the channel from Los Angeles had seemed twice as long as when he made it a few weeks before, and he had hurried all the way from the hotel straight to the little cavern. But now that he had found her again, there seemed to be plenty of time for everything, and he stood quite silent looking down at her. He was glad he had found her

there, glad, in a curious, unreasoning way, for the quiet of the late afternoon, for the faint fragrance of the Mariposa lilies blooming just beyond the ledge. Yet he let her know nothing of this in what he said.

"So here you are, after all! I thought I should find you here."

She had not heard him come and was startled into a cry.

"You!" she gasped, and lifted eyes in which the telltale signs of tears were still quite evident, so evident that, with a woman's instinct to hide them, she caught up the necklace and held it toward him.

"See what I've found!" she exclaimed.

But he paid no heed. Instead, manlike, he proceeded, quite unconsciously, to say the one thing that could hurt her most.

"I looked for you at the hotel first, then I came on up here. I knew you wouldn't go till I came!"

The color that had flooded her face at the sound of his voice faded again. She was quite white as she asked quietly:

"How could you know I would stay?"

393A

He laughed easily, settling himself confidently on the moss at her side.

"Because I hadn't paid you yet," he answered gaily. "Don't you think that was clever of me, Wildenai?"

"I would rather you did not call me that," she told him coldly, "It sounds irreverent." And she dropped her eyes, which had filled again miserably, to the film of white in her lap. Then, with a pitiful attempt to hurt him in return: "Of course you realize that I really don't know much about you. I don't want you to think that I distrusted you exactly—" she marvelled at herself that she could say such things to him, but went recklessly on. "The check wasn't there,—and so, well,—it seemed wisest to wait. They said you were coming back, and I couldn't afford to lose it; so I stayed. Just a matter of business, you see!" She finished in a tone which, except for a suspicious tremble, was satisfactorily disagreeable.

But Blair's armor, since his return, seemed proof against such thrusts as she could give.

"Won't play Indian at all, then?" he retorted teasingly. "But of course not! How could you when you happen to come from the

She lingered each morning until the steamer had rounded the point.

other side of the house? However," he continued whimsically, "there are such things as English roses, you know. I've always loved them, too, even when they were thorny!"

He pulled absently at a fern growing near, while, suddenly, for no particular reason, the color glowed again in the cheeks of the little art teacher. She smiled, half unwillingly.

"But don't pull up the wild flowers here," she warned him, "You'll have the forester after you! When did you get back?" she added. "Where have you been so long?" burned on her lips, but she scorned to ask it.

"About an hour ago," he replied amiably. "The boat was late."

"I was beginning to think you'd given up coming at all." She could not keep it back. "The duke never bothered to, you know."

But this blow, like the first, failed to reach any vulnerable spot. Blair did not flinch.

"No, naturally *he* didn't! He was English, and you can't depend upon the English, I've discovered. But there's not the slightest reason for linking me up with him. The princess never ran away now, did she? And I—" He

paused, then without looking at her he began again.

"Seriously, I'm sorry if I seemed to be deserting. I—well, honestly, I didn't know what else to do. You suggested it yourself, you remember! And I'd promised my father to look after some business for him in Los Angeles while I was out here. You see, he—our family, have lived in the East for a long time now, but we used to own pretty much all of Los Angeles county some three centuries ago, when the Spanish were here, and—" Again he broke off abruptly. "Do you want to know about me?" he demanded.

Miss Hastings leaned breathlessly toward him. Her heart was beating wildly.

"Oh, please!" she begged.

"Perhaps I should have told you at the first," he began, "or at least after you told me who you were, but—anyway, I didn't. I'd never told anyone before and I didn't much suppose I ever would. There's a reason, though, why I'm particularly interested in this legend, too, a reason just as good as you've got. I'm—well, I'm one of Wildenai's great, great grandsons!"

And then, because she sat quite silent there in the shadows, and motionless except for fingering something white that lay in her lap, he waited uneasily. Was she angry again, he wondered, or perhaps she was only laughing!

She was the first to break the silence.

"Are you trying to be funny?" Her voice was very cold.

"Not at all," he answered hotly. "It must be all of ten generations back or even more, and of course it wasn't all Spanish afterward, but, just the same, I'm as much a descendant of the princess as you are of the duke,—always have been! I'm just as proud of it, too. Possibly you will remember that the Spanish beat the English to it, at least in California. Anyway," he finished bitterly, "what difference does it make? So far as I can see, it only gives us one more good subject to quarrel about!"

Then out of the dimness came a queer little sound, whether of tears or of laughter it was impossible to know. For the least part of a second a hand brushed his own.

"Oh, no!" she whispered, "Let's not do that. It wouldn't be right! And see," she

laughed tremulously, "Isn't it strange I should have found it today, but," she lifted the white thing in her lap, "here is Wildenai's wedding dress—and the chain of garnets!"

The cavern was quite dark before they had finished talking about it, but at length they laid the poor little ghost of a garment reverently back among the stones and rose to go.

"But the necklace?" Blair asked, hesitating, "do you think we ought to leave that here?"

The girl considered a moment.

"It's really yours," she decided. "Nobody else could have the least claim to it."

"Except—" Suddenly his eyes shone with a strange expression before which the little art teacher instinctively shrank. He took a step toward her.

"I believe I'll give the garnets back," he announced. "I fancy that's what the princess would have liked to do if she'd had the chance. Besides," his eyes grew still darker, "they were meant in the first place for a wedding gift, and so if you—"

He would have clasped them about her neck, but Miss Hastings backed frantically away.

"No!—not for worlds," she cried. "You know you're only saying it because you think you can't get out of it!" And before he could realize just what was happening, she was gone.

The boat for Los Angeles was unusually crowded that night. For either this reason, or some other she would not acknowledge, Miss Hastings found herself pushed aside by more impatient passengers every time she attempted to enter the gangway.

"All aboard!" called a peremptory voice from somewhere on deck. She took a step forward, hesitated, drew back. The plank was hauled irrevocably away, and she turned to face Blair standing just behind her on the wharf.

"I was sure you wouldn't run away," he declared, "but if you had—!"

She let him lead her back along the broad boardwalk toward the hotel until they stood within the shadow of the huge boulder which for centuries has marked the outer boundary

of the Bay of Moons. Beyond them the lights of the St. Catherine glimmered down the hill and on over the water, rimming with golden bubbles the outlines of the pier.

"Wildenai!" Out of the darkness his voice came to her, mocking, tender, wholly insistent. "Foolish, obstinate little lady! Can't you see how it's up to you,—up to the English to make amends? Honestly now, when he began it I don't imagine even that rascal Drake himself would have believed a family scrap could last the better part of four centuries. Don't you really think it's about time for you to call it off?"

And flinging her scruples to the winds, Miss Hastings suddenly decided that it was.

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